5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AWll Kerala AWll
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showered on it, and it is often garlanded. Incantations and *mantras* are recited by the priest during the ceremony.

Bell-metal oil lamps are lit in front of the images and their number is usually 3, 5 or 7. In each lamp there are 5 to 7 wicks pointing in different directions. Only coco-nut oil or *ghee* is used in these ceremonial lamps. In front of these lamps are placed three banana leaves with the cut end of the leaf facing the image and the tip pointing away from it, facing north or east. On one of the leaves some uncooked rice is placed and a husked coco-nut is kept over it, while in the other leaf unhusked paddy is heaped with a coco-nut placed on it. The eyes of the coco-nut are away from the snake idol and are towards the tip of the banana leaf. On the third leaf are placed a few small bananas of a special variety called *kadali*, because *kadali* is referred to in the Vedas.

The boiled rice offering is then placed near the shrine and some money is offered to the idol by dropping it in the oil of the lamp. These preparations are offered to the snake god who is supposed to partake of them. Thereafter the *prasad* or the offering is distributed among the members of the family, and the priest gets half of it. The *prasad* must not be eaten by a crow or dog as this is a bad omen. After the worship, the contents of the leaves are given to the priest who therefore takes great pains to see that this particular ceremony is well conducted.

Once a month or once every three months, low caste Hindus called Pulluvans visit the houses which have snake shrines. Usually they come on Tuesdays or Fridays, and they sing songs in praise of the snake gods. This is done in a rather crude manner to the accompaniment of crude single-stringed instruments called *veena kunju*. For this invocation, an oil lamp is lit before the shrine, and the above-mentioned three banana leaves and their respective contents are placed before the image of the serpent. Usually a woman accompanies the male singer and joins in the chorus, playing the while upon a crude drum. After the praise has been adequately rendered, the ceremony is brought to a close and the musician gets his share of money and materials. This ceremony is meant to propitiate and

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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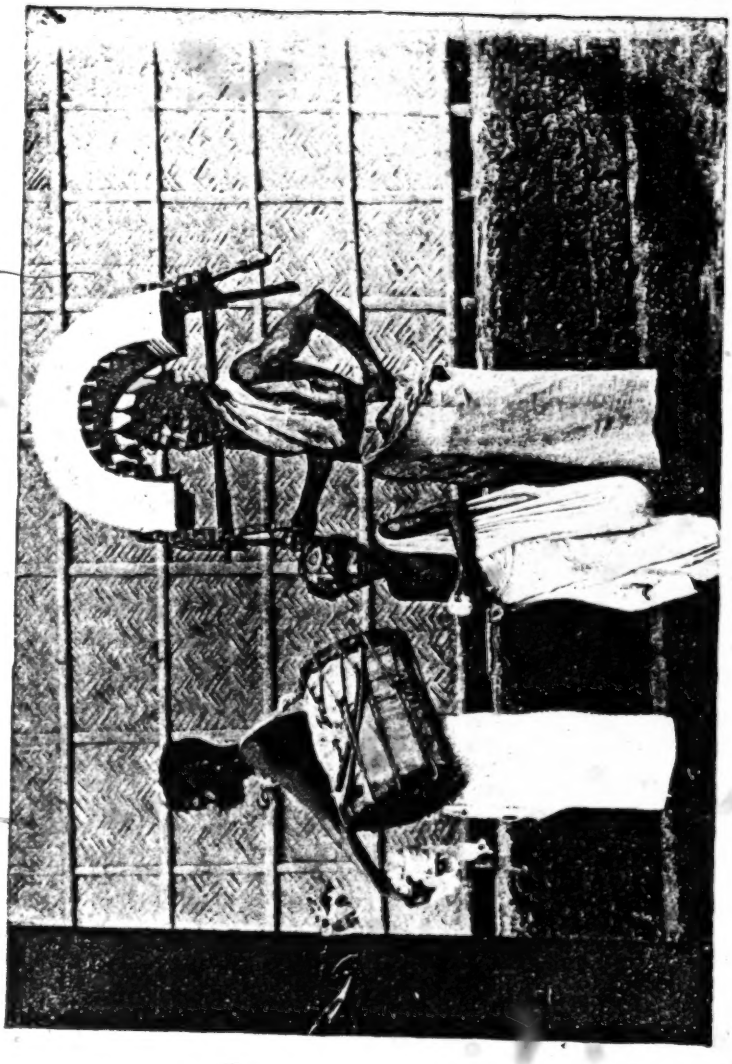

A PALNI PILGRIM, WITH HIS KAVADI.

[Facing P. 230]

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564 sword. The goldsmith has some responsibility connected
[326] with the sword, perhaps on account of its ornamentation, although the ordinary Malayali blacksmith is quite equal to the ordinary work of a goldsmith as well as repairing clocks and watches. Following comes the Arayân with the silver umbrella to an accompaniment of very noisy drumming; he and his umbrella in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, one behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at day-break. These six days of the festival are called Vilakku.

796 A word about the drumming. The number of instru-
● 534 mentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted over fifty, all Nâyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle, and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with drum-sticks, curved, not straight, thicker at the end held in the hand. The
[533] accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong stroke, was truly amazing, although the rhythm was being changed perpetually; and their crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible leader of this strange orchestra.

Early on the seventh and last day, when the morning procession is over, there comes to the temple a man of the Pânan* caste. He carries a small cadjan umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella he brings should have a long handle and with this umbrella
[293] in his hand he performs a dance before the temple. The Malabar umbrella has a very long handle as a rule, in fact the correct way to carry an umbrella is with the end of the handle resting in the hand while the arm is straight at the side.

[34½] The temple which is figured in the plate, is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste

* Pânan, a caste numerically small, and inferior. They make umbrellas of cadjan and perform at temples.

1/2 [See plate XII, facing P. 252, Category 116--Analyst]

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a small lamp or burning wick, and the devil dancer throws a handful towards the house. It then finds its way to the tree to the west under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp; some Brâhmans* repeat mantrams and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three, are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely, a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple where the priest descends quickly from the elephant and is taken inside the temple by the Mûssad priests. He who has been carrying the sword all this time places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for 15 minutes! [778] until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam, fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil dancers will with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions say, in the way of oracle, whether the Dêvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance he falls in a sort of swoon, and every soul, excepting only the priests and the temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which 796 have been erected for temporary habitation around the 782 temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be 564 made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, the senior members of the Taravâds who stand in the position of owners and who, by the way, have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest; and as soon as they have done so they too depart. There will remain now [793] in the temple three Mûssads, one drummer (Marayar) [534] and two temple servants: no others. These Mûssads are commonly called Brâhmans though the Nambûtiris do not admit them to be such. The reason for all this secrecy seems to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic [789] secret. The Mûssad priests repeat mantrams over the [793] goats for an hour as a preliminary to the sacrifice. Then

* East Coast Brahmans (Pattar) I think: perhaps Mûssads.

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793 the chief priest dons a red silk cloth and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a small bill-hook—while the goats are taken to a certain room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room as there are to it but two walls, running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south; the chief priest stand to the east of a goat facing west as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams and the goats never flinch,—the effect of the mantrams! Several cocks are then sacrified in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron powder and lime water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mûssads only see the sacrifice, a part of the rite supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple
[534] by the northern door to the north side of the temple; and from this place one of the temple servants, *who is blind-folded*, drags it three times round the temple, the Mûssads following closely repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him and does not know what is being done. After the third round the drummer and the temple servant go away and the three Mûssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice when cooked is taken to the kâvu (grove), to the north of the temple, and there the Mûssads again ply their mantrams. As
[533] each mantram is ended a handful of saffron powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer who by this time has returned, the only one present with the priests, keeps up an *obligato pianissimo* with his drum, using his fingers: he faces the north and the priests face the south. Presently, having done with the mantrams, the priests run (*not walk*) once round the temple carrying the cooked rice and scattering it wide as they go, repeating their mantrams. They enter the temple and remain within until day-break. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mûssads go out and the five Nambûtiris again enter before sunrise and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day. For this one day only. The next morning the Mûssad priests return and resume their duties.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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this ceremony. Thus having purged their bodies of all worldliness they are taken into the ceremony and are seated as described before. Now by means of the *mantrams* and poojah the serpent gods are propitiated and in consequence they manifest themselves in the bodies of these female representatives of theirs. The entrance of the gods into their bodies is characterised by a fearful concussion of their whole frame, gradually developing into a ceaseless, shaking, particularly the upper parts. A few minutes afterwards, they begin to speak one by one and their speeches are regarded as expressions of the god's will. Sometimes the gods appear in the bodies of all these females and sometimes only in those of a select few or none at all. The refusal of the gods to enter into such persons is symbolical of some want of cleanliness and purity in them; which contingency is looked upon as a source of anxiety to the individual. It may also suggest the displeasure of these gods towards the family in respect of which the ceremony is performed. In either case, such refusal on the part of the gods is an index of their ill-will or dissatisfaction. In cases where the gods refuse to appear in any one of those seated for the purpose, the ceremony is prolonged until the gods are so properly propitiated as to constrain them to manifest themselves. Then after the lapse of the number of days fixed for the ceremony and after the will of the serpent gods is duly expressed the ceremonies close.

"One other small item of offering to these gods consists in certain ballads sung by the Pulluvar females going about from house to house at stated seasons of the year. They take a pretty large pitcher, close its opening by means of a small circular piece of thin leather which is fastened on to the vessel by means of strings strongly tied round its neck. Another string is adjusted to the leather cover which when played on by means of the fingers, produces a hoarse note which is said to please the god's ears, pacify their anger and lull them into sleep. This vessel is carried from house to house in the day time by these Pulluvar females; and placing the vessel in a particular position on the ground, and sitting in a particular fashion in relation to the vessel, they play on the string which then produces a very pleasing musical note. Then they sing ballads to the accompaniment of these notes. After continuing this for sometime they stop, and getting their customary dues from the family, go their own way. It is believed that these notes and the ballads are peculiarly pleasing to the serpent gods, who bless those for whose sakes the music has been rendered. In consequence of the halo of sanctity that has been popularly thrown round the serpent it is considered a sin of a most heinous nature to kill one of these deified reptiles. The killing of a cobra is regarded with the utmost concern amongst us. In such case the carcase is taken and duly burned with all

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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The above two subdivisions are mere titles and the members belonging to them are not numerous in the State.

6. *Márár.*—The members of this subdivision act as drummers and musicians in temples and also render important services to Brahmans and Kshatriyas in their ceremonies.

7. *Pidamangalam Nayars.*—The members of this clan are engaged in escorting processions in temples. Some also act as sweepers in them. There are not, I am informed, very many in the State belonging to this subdivision.

8. *Pallichán Nayars.*—These are palanquin-bearers of the Brahmans and Kshatriyas.

9. *Vattekád Nayars.*—They are the pressers of oil for use in temples. It has been remarked by some that the Vattékád Nayars are not always admitted to be true Nayars and that in some places they are called Vániyans (oil mongers.) The subdivision is endogamous. There are two minor subdivisions, the members of which neither interdine nor intermarry.

10. *Chempukotti Nayars.*—These are the workers in copper for temples and Brahman houses. The following tradition regarding them is interesting :—

"Chempukottis or Chempóttis (copper tappers) are copper-workers whose traditional business is the roofing of the *srikóvil* or inner shrine of the temple with that metal. They are said to have originally formed part of the *Kammálan* or artisan community. When the great temple of Taliparamba was completed, it was purified on a scale of unprecedented grandeur, no less than thousand Brahmans being employed. What was their dismay when the ceremony was well forward, to see a Chempukotti coming from the *srikóvil*, where he had been putting the finishing touches to the roof! This appeared to involve a re-commencement of the whole tedious and costly ritual; and the Brahmans gave vent to their feelings of despair, when a vision from Heaven re-assured them. And thereafter Chempótties have been raised in the social scale, and are not regarded as a polluting caste." [1]

11. *Otattu Nayars.*—They are the tile and thatch makers for temples and Brahman houses.

12. *Educhéri Nayars.*—They are the makers and sellers of dairy produce.

1. Malabar District Gazetteer, page 120.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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played. There are also other kinds of plays, which are called *Attakkathas* (plays in which the incidents are represented by dancing and gestures) in Travancore, and *Kathakalis* in Malabar. Many additions to these were made by different scholars in different times, and they now number about fifty-six, most of which are now being acted. Many or all of them possess a high order of literary excellence, and are, year after year, prescribed as vernacular text books for University Examinations.

Personal adornment of the actors.—In the beginning the actors had no regular dress as at present, nor was there any curtain dividing the audience from the stage. The only theatrical property known in those days were figures clumsily drawn upon the bark of the areca palm and attached to the bodies of the actors, while the orchestra consisted only of the *maddalam*, a kind of drum. But innovations were soon introduced, and the first of these were those introduced by the Tirúr or Bettattunad Raja.

It may not be out of place here to give a short sketch of a day's performance as it is to-day. A travelling company, which usually consists of twelve actors, four singers, and four musicians who form an "orchestra with drums (*maddalam* and *chenda*), gongs (*chengalam*) and cymbals (*elathálam*)", is invited and lodged in a house near which they are to give the performance. In the morning they are given gingelly oil for an oil-bath, and are then served with rice, *kanji*, and *pappadam*. This forms their breakfast. After it, they retire to sleep till about four o'clock in the afternoon. At five o'clock they are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and half an hour later begins, by beat of drums and other musical instruments of the company, a formal announcement to the villagers in the neighbourhood that a play is to be performed that night.

The stage is nothing more than a crude wooden structure slightly raised from the ground. The drop curtain consists usually of pieces of cloth sewn together and the figure of a god or an animal drawn thereon. The auditorium consists of mats strewn on the floor for the audience to sit on, while two bell-metal lamps, containing cocoanut-oil and wicks of rolled cotton cloth, are the only means of lighting the theatre. Sometimes to add to the solemnity of the occasion conch shells are

9:Iyer E-4,5 (ca.1902-1906)1912
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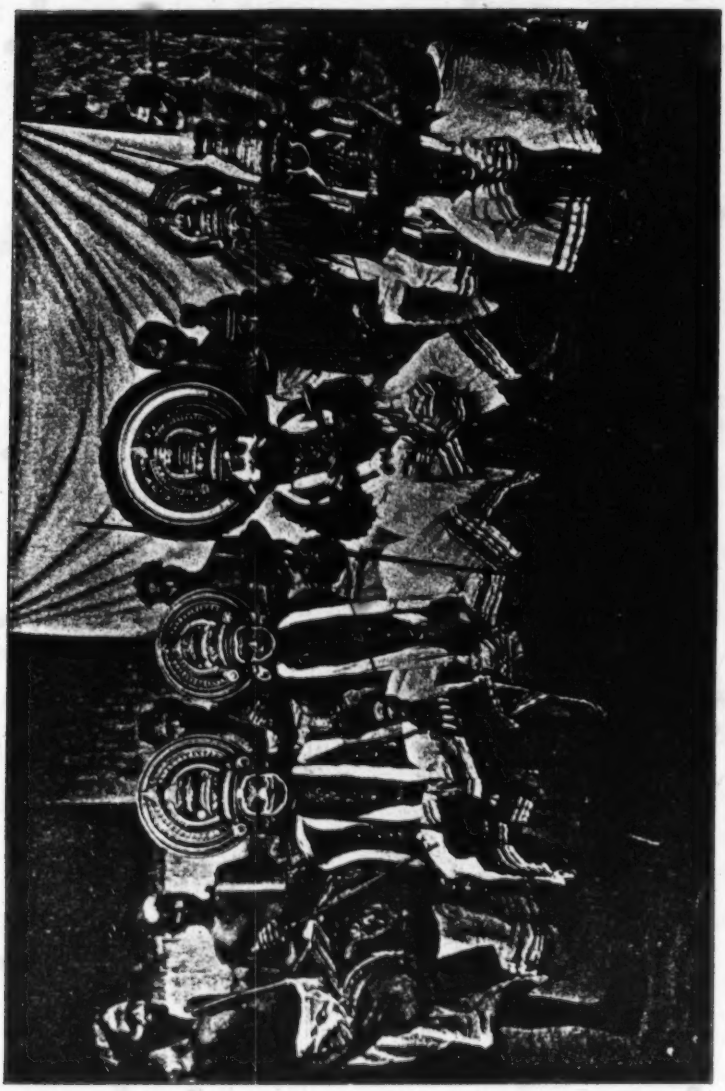

CHARACTERS OF MALABAR DRAMA (KATHA KALI).

[facing p.65]

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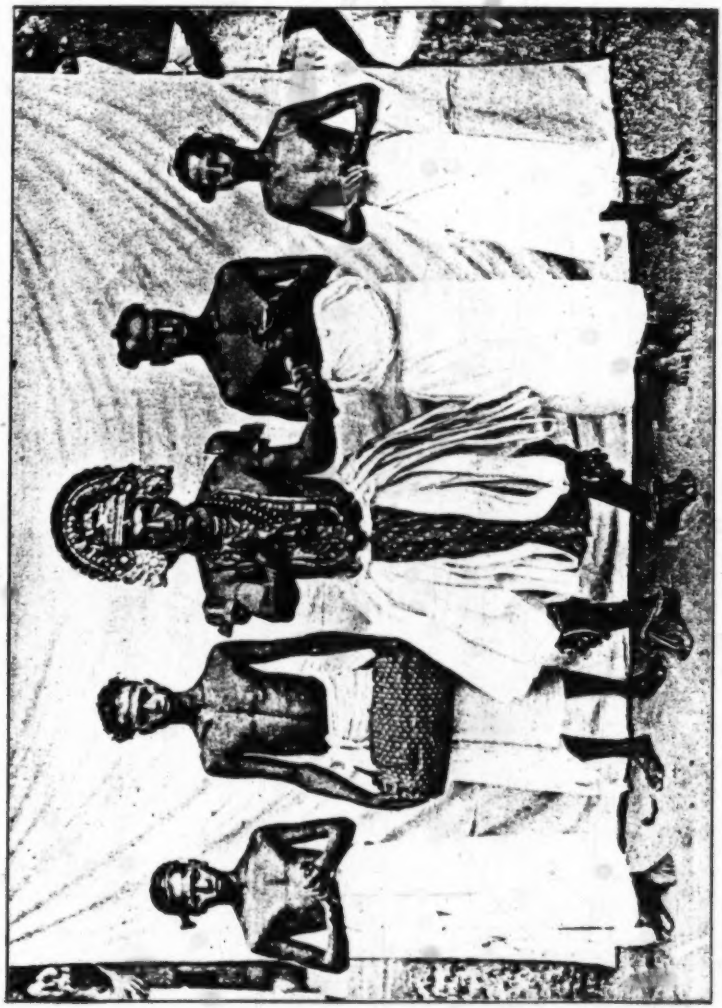

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OTTAMTHULLAL.

[facing p. 66]

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Another peculiar feature of this festival is that all the male and female members of the family sit apart at meals. By mid-day the principal meal is over, and each goes dressed in fine attire now, seeks the amusement most congenial to him. Field-games, such as hand-ball or rounders, personal combats, games of chess, dice, and cards, dancing by females, and music parties constitute the leading forms of enjoyment from morning until evening.

796 [264] [526] [535] [524]

Hand-ball matches.—A small stick is planted at a fixed spot, and the young men divide themselves into two rival parties. A member of one party stands at the post, while the others stand away from it. The ball which is usually made of coir rope is thrown by a member of one of the opposing party, and on its being struck by the man at the post, the others attempt to catch it before the bounce or stop its onward career. If the ball hits the post, or if any member of the opposing party catches the ball before it has touched the ground, that player's turn is over. Another man takes his place and so on, until all the members of one party have had their turn. Then the rival section begins to play exactly in the same manner and under the same rules as before.

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Combats are of two kinds, namely, those between single adversaries, and those held in batches. In the first, the people of one locality divide themselves into two parties. When the match is opened, the leader of one group brings forward a trained pugilist who goes into the intervening open space, between the two groups, challenging any one from the opposite camp to meet him in fair fight. A little while after, some one from the other party takes up the challenge, and then the combat begins. The victor is rewarded with presents of cloths and money by the rich and generous members of the community assembled there. The same process is continued till the close of the day. In Palghat the *Onam* games are of a rougher character; the tenants of certain landlords turn out each under their own leader and engage in sham fights in which there is much rough play.

There is also another amusement, in which a peculiar bow, formed of a strong and slightly elastic wood with a split bamboo finely polished for the string, is used. By means of a

796 534

9:Iyer E-4,5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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796 stick, it is possible to produce a kind of musical tone, for [534] which a party is organised to play on it. This entertainment is much admired, and interests the people very much.

(2). *Tiruvâtira* :—This is another important national festival, which falls on the *Tiruvâtira* day in Dhanu (December-[776] January). This concerns the Nayar women, and is said to commemorate the death of *Kâma Déva*, the cupid of Indian mythology, by the burning fire of the third eye of the God [533] Siva. Before day-break the festive day, the young women of the Nayar families hasten to the nearest tank or river for bathing, and during the bath, they amuse themselves with *Tiruvâtira pittu*, songs accompanied by regular splashing of water, supposed to be symbolical of beating of the breast, on account of their grief for Kama's death. At day-break, they return home, and, gaily dressed and adorned, they [526] go to the nearest temple for worship. After a slight breakfast, they proceed to enjoy the *Ushinjal* (a swinging apparatus made of bamboo and attached to a horizontal branch of a tree). [264] Immense pleasure is taken in this game. The family dinner [262] is at noon, when bananas, sliced and fried in cocoanut-oil, [431] seasoned with salt, are freely distributed among the friends and relatives assembled there. Ripe plantains, and the sweet pre-[263] paration of arrow-root flour purified and seasoned with jaggery or sugar and cocoanuts, also form one of the chief items of the feast.

[804] (3). *Vishu* :—Next in importance to the two great national [777] festivals just described, comes *Vishu* on the first of Medam (March-April), which is the astronomical new year's day; and a man's prosperity during the year is believed to depend on his seeing some good and lucky thing on the *Vishu* morning. It is the custom to prepare on the night previous, what is known as *Kani*. A bell-metal vessel (*uruli*) is taken, and in it are arranged a *grantha* or cadjan manuscript, a gold ornament, a new washed cloth, some flowers of the *konna* tree (Cassia fistula), some coins in a silver cup, a cocoanut cut into two, a cucumber, some mangoes, and a jack-fruit. On either side of the vessel, are also placed two lamps burning, while there is a plank of wood or some other seat placed in front of it. These are placed in the chief room inside the house, and in the morning, the members of the family, one by one, are taken to the

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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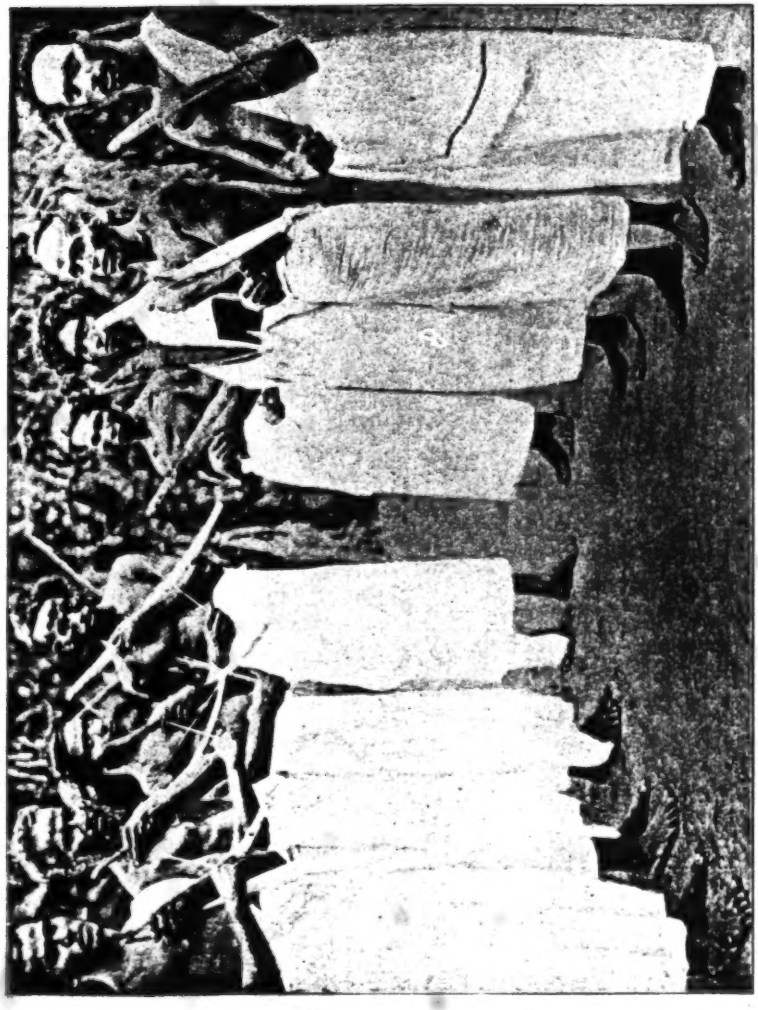

A PARTY OF NAYARS: TIMING ON BOWSTRINGS DURING ONAM FESTIVAL.

[Facing p. 71]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Nayar

Pulayan head-man raises a mound of earth on which are thrown a little manure and a handful of seed. He then yokes the cattle to the plough and turns a square plot of ground, taking care to have furrows made in it, and the plough dropped on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and the master throws the seed in the furrow, when the Pulaya head-man invokes the blessings of the gods and the deceased ancestors on the seeds that have been sown broadcast, on the cattle that are let loose, and also on the members of the family, and prays them for a good crop, much sunshine, and a good harvest. A cocoanut is then cut on the ploughshare, and if the hind portion is larger than the front one, it predicts an excellent harvest. If the nut is cut into two equal portions, the harvest will be moderate; if the cut passes through the eyes of the nut or if no water is left in the cut portions, misfortune is foreboded. The portions of the cocoanut are then picked up with the milk inside them and a leaf of the *tulsi* plant (Ocymum sanctum) is dropped into each; if the leaf turns to the right, a prosperous harvest is assured; if to the left, the contrary. The ceremonial concludes with loud shouts and invocations to the gods of husbandry; and the unused seeds are distributed among the workmen.

Nira:—The bringing in of the first fruits (*Nira*) is celebrated at the end of Karkadagam (August), previous to which the doors and windows of the houses are cleansed with the leaves of a tree called *paragam* (Ficus hispida) and decorated with rice flour, while the walls are white-washed, and the yard smeared with cow-dung. On the gates of the houses are placed various kinds of flowers together with their leaves and branches, *viz*:—*athi* (Ficus racemosa), *ithi* (Ficus venosa), *arayil* (Ficus religiosa), *peral* (Ficus Indica), *illi* (young bamboo leaves), *nelli* (Phyllanthus Emblica), *jack* (artocarpus integrifolia), and *mango* (manganefera indica). On the morning of the ceremonial day, the priest of the temple comes out preceded by a Marar blowing a conch-shell, when a bunch of the ears of paddy already placed by the Pulayans outside the outer wall of the temple is taken by him to the temple with the same Marar blowing the conch. Every house-holder then sends out to the fields a man duly purified by a bath and smeared with ashes to gather some rice. As he brings it to

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

776 [782] the malignant propensities of those spirits. The most popular of the festivals is the *Mandalam*, which begins on the first of 796 Vrischigam (middle of November) and lasts for forty-one days. 776 In addition to the daily *pújas* to the image of Bhagavati by Brahman priests, special rites and ceremonies (*Kúlamezhuthum Páttum*) are also performed by a particular class of Sudras to the figure of the goddess made on the floor by means of 776 coloured powders, while the devotees sing songs in her praise 796 to the accompaniment of lute-like musical instruments. A [534] man in a fantastic dress with an array of jingling bells round [532] his loins, heavy sounding bell-metal anklets on each foot and a scythe-shaped sword in his hand impersonates the goddess and dances to the sound of tom-toms round the figure of the god- [785] dess Bhadrakáli on the floor. The *Velichapád*, as he is called, [787] becomes highly excited and in his frenzy sometimes even cuts his forehead and causes it to bleed. He speaks, or rather the deity speaks through him, in broken yet commanding tones wholly unlike his own and makes oracular responses to the enquiries addressed to him.

796 On a night in the latter part of the month of Dhanu (early 776 in January), a golden image of the goddess is placed on the back [532] of a big decorated elephant, and, amidst the beating of drums, [788] the firing of pop-guns and crackers, is taken out in procession. [231] The elephant with the goddess is supported on each side by [791] elephants whose numbers vary according to the means of the villagers. The *Velichapád* is indispensable and is accompanied by a group of well-dressed women and girls, each carrying in her hand a plate (*tálam*) full of rice and a light placed on the [782] top of it. The festival ends with a display of fire-works, and the ceremony closes with the sacrifice of goats or fowls. On the same principle but on different lines are celebrated various propitiatory and sacrificial festivals in honour of the other [782] aforesaid deities. Generally, after the harvests, the *Velicha-pads* are taken out in procession to the Hindu houses in each village to receive offerings of a measure of paddy and small coins.

776 *Sásta* or *Ayyappan*.—According to Keralólpathi, Parasu- 778 rama with the object of protecting the newly created country (Kérala) is said to have established many temples and dedicat- [788] ed them to this deity. The most important of these is at Sabarimala in the Chengannur Taluk of Travancore, which

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Pulluvans

ries "brother" but which really refer to someone of another village and *kiriyam*.[1]

The Putanpumakkil house stood on ground belonging to a Nayar *janmi*, cousin of the former Secretary of the States Ministry in New Delhi, Sri V. P. Menon, called Wuppala Shankara Narayana Menon. They paid a *kudiyiruppu* rent of one *fanan* (annas four and pies six) yearly. They made their miserable living from plying their traditional trade. To give me a sample of their musical abilities, they offered me a concert on the instruments which they used; those included the famous *Pulluva-kudam*, a sort of stringed instrument cum drum; but I am afraid that the effect was not pleasing to my ears.

While carrying out these investigations among polyandrous households in the Walluvanad taluk, I endeavoured to obtain statistics concerning the proportions of the sexes of the two principal polyandrous castes studied, the Thandans and the Kammalans, but they were unobtainable. The Tahsildar of the Walluvanad taluk, on instruction from the Collector of Malabar, however, sent me the following letter:

"Tuluk Office, Walluvanad
Perintalmanna, Dt. 9-12-49

Sir,
Statistics of certain populations
Called for – Furnished.
Collector's Ref. W-4-1450/49 dated 4-12-49

As ordered by the Collector's reference cited, the statistics of Izhuvas and Kammalans are not available in the Census records available in this office. The figures now furnished are approximate and are based on local enquiries made by me and my subordinates.

	Male	Female
Thandans (Izuvans) / /	5100	6100
Kammalans (Karuvans, Thattan, Musari & Assari)	2600	3100

signed
? Menon
Tahsildar
9.12.49"

[1] Iyer, in *The Cochin Tribes and Castes* (Vol. I, p. 148, 1909 ed., see Bibliography), says that, with the Pulluvans "nor can a woman allow herself to conjugal servitude to more than one". In view of the above evidence, this pronouncement does not appear to be correct.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
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564 country. They are confined to a few localities in
[184] Travancore, and until recently there was a distinctive
[463] difference in regard to dress and ornaments between the Tamil Padam and the ordinary Nāyars. The occupation of the Padamangalakkar is temple service, such as sweeping, carrying lamps during processions, etc. The Tamil Padakkar are believed to have taken to various kinds of occupation, and, for this reason, to have become merged with other sections.

5. Vāthi or Vātti.—This name is not found in the Jatinirnaya, probably because it had not been differentiated from Mārān. The word is a corruption of vāzhti, meaning praying for happiness, and refers to their
[534] traditional occupation. They use a peculiar drum, called nantuni. Some call themselves Daivampatis, or wards of God, and follow the makkathāyam system of inheritance (in the male line).

6. Itacheri or Idacheri, also called Pantaris in
[234] South Travancore. They are herdsmen, and vendors of milk, butter and curds. The name suggests a relation of some kind to the Idaiyan caste of the Tamil country.

7. Karuvelam, known also by other names, such as
[644] Kappiyara and Tiruvattar. Their occupation is service in the palace of the Mahārāja, and they are the custodians of his treasury and valuables. Fifty-two families are believed to have been originally brought from Kolathanād, when a member thereof was adopted into the Travancore royal family.

8. Arikuravan.—A name, meaning those who reduced the quantity of rice out of the paddy given to them to husk at the temple of Kazhayakkuttam near Trivandrum, by which they were accosted by the local chieftain.

9. Pallichchan.—Bearers of palanquins for Brāhmans and Malabar chieftains. They are also employed

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of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purôhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brâhmans) then gives the tâli [793] to the Mânavâlan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavâlan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tâli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brâhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nâyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the procession, and turmeric water is sprinkled. When they come [231] home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavâlan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavâlan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

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Malabar. "The first regular ceremony performed during pregnancy is known as pulikudi or drinking tamarind, which corresponds to the Pumsavanam of the Brāhmans. But there are other observances of less importance, which commonly, if not invariably, precede this, and may be considered as corresponding to the Garbharakshana (embryo or womb protection) ceremony sometimes performed by Brāhmans, though not one of the obligatory sacraments. Sometimes the pregnant woman is made to consume daily a little ghee (clarified butter), which has been consecrated by a Nambūdiri with appropriate mantrams. Sometimes exorcists of the lower castes, such as Pānans, are called in, and perform a ceremony called Balikkala, in which they draw magic patterns on the ground, into which the girl throws lighted wicks, and sing rude songs to avert from the unborn babe the unwelcome attentions of evil spirits, accompanying them on a small drum called tudi, or with bell-metal cymbals. The ceremony concludes with the sacrifice of a cock, if the woman is badly affected by the singing. The pulikudi is variously performed in the fifth, seventh, or ninth month. An auspicious hour has to be selected by the village astrologer for this as for most ceremonies. A branch of a tamarind tree should be plucked by the pregnant woman's brother, who should go to the tree with a kindi (bell-metal vessel) of water, followed by an Enangatti* carrying a hanging lamp with five wicks (tukkuvilakku), and, before plucking it, perform three pradakshinams round it. In the room in which the ceremony is to be

* An Enangan or Inangan is a man of the same caste and sub-division or marriage group. It is usually translated "kinsman," but is at once wider and narrower in its connotation. My Enangans are all who can marry the same people that I can. An Enangatti is a female member of an Enangan's family.

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he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayan, and executes any repairs that may be needful, and, in like manner, the blacksmith looks to the sword. In the afternoon, the headman of the Tiyans, called the Tandān, comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts—an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming, and a large crowd with the Tandān, and in front of him are men dancing, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling madly. Then come the blacksmith and the goldsmith with the sword. Following comes the Arayan with the silver umbrella to the accompaniment of very noisy drumming, in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, the other behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at daybreak. These six days of the festival are called Vilākku. A word about the drumming. The number of instrumentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted fifty, all Nāyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle; and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with curved drum sticks, thicker at the end held in the hand.

534 796 [533] The accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong note although the rhythm was changed perpetually, was truly amazing. And the crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible 796 leader of this strange orchestra. Early on the seventh 794 and last day, when the morning procession is over, there 564 comes to the temple a man of the Pānan caste (umbrella-makers and devil-dancers). He carries a small cadjan [293] umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella should have a long handle, and, with it in his hand, he performs a dance before the temple. The temple is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste below the Nāyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into the hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pānan receives about 10 lbs. of raw rice for his performance. In the afternoon, a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple, carrying with them swords, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing [482] salt. These baskets are carried slung on a pole. The [685] use of salt here is obscure.* I remember a case of a [578] Nāyar's house having been plundered, the idol knocked down, and salt put in the place where it should have [786] stood. The act was looked on as most insulting. The Vettuvans dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some

* The Vettuvans were once salt-makers.

796 [787] in a sort of swoon, and everyone, excepting only the priests and temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, who have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest, and, as soon as they have done so, they depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mūssads, one drummer (Marayar), and two temple servants. The reason for all this secrecy seems to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mūssad priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a preliminary to the sacrifice. Then the chief priest dons a red silk cloth, and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a small bill-hook, while the goats are taken to a certain room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room, as there are to it but two walls running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south. The chief priest stands to the east of the goat, facing west, as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams, and the goats never flinch—the effect of the mantrams. Several cocks are then sacrificed in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron (turmeric) powder and lime-water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mūssads only see the sacrifice—a part of the rite which

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is supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple by the northern door to the north side of the temple, and from this place one of the temple servants, who is blindfolded, drags it three times round the temple, the Mūssads following closely, repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him, and does not know what is being done. After the third round, the drummer and the temple servant go away, and the three Mūssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice, when cooked, is taken to the kāvu (grove) to the north of the temple, and there the Mūssads again ply their mantrams. As each mantram is ended, a handful of saffron (turmeric) powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer, who by this time has returned, keeps up an obligato pianissimo with his drum, using his fingers. He faces the north, and the priests face the south. Presently the priests run (not walk) once round the temple, carrying the cooked rice, and scattering it wide as they go, repeating mantrams. They enter the temple, and remain within until daybreak. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak, the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mūssads go out, and the five Nambūtiris again enter before sunrise, and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day, for this day only. The next morning, the Mūssad priests return and resume their duties. Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult, busy in its religious effusion, is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nāyar women looking on from the

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